



Sermon Notes

Term – Summer 2018

Series – The Overflow: loving people and being the gospel

Gathering & Date – the 10 & the 5, 15 July

Title – Spaghetti doesn't grow on trees

Preacher – Paul Langham

Reading – see below and overleaf

Main message of this talk in one sentence – the Christian gospel is not a matter of behaviour control but heart renewal

Main points –

- Jesus teaches us that the reality of our heart will always find a way out – in our speech and our actions.
- Whatever the external demonstration of our faith (serving others, sharing our faith) is not real if it is an 'add-on'.
- These things are only real if they overflow from a renewed heart
- Attending to our heart – or rather allowing Jesus to attend to our heart through the ministry of his Holy Spirit – is not some form of navel-gazing; it is in fact the most 'missional' thing we can do, the most effective preparation for our evangelism, and the means to ensure our acts of mercy and kindness are genuine
- This is both a challenge and a liberation – a challenge to allow Jesus to show us our heart and transform it; a liberation from any need to be other than who He has designed us to be

For further thought and prayer –

1. *Whatever you've stored in your heart, whether good or bad, will come out in your speech and conduct* (Luke 6:45, Who?). In what sense is this
 - a. a challenge and
 - b. a liberation?
2. How do we allow Jesus to attend to our heart?
3. Is there anything we do in His name which is more 'add-on' than real? In other words, is what we do a genuine overflow from what he has done within us?
4. Are any parts of my life built on sand?
5. What does it mean to build on rock?
6. "Religion is the height of humanity's rebellion against God." (Karl Barth). Why is this the case?

READINGS

Luke 6:43-45 – NIV (UK)	Luke 6:43-45 – Who?
<p>⁴³ 'No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵ A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.</p>	<p>⁴³⁻⁴⁴ 'Trees are defined by their fruit: a good tree produces tasty fruit, a bad one sour fruit. You don't go to a bramble bush for apples, or to an apple tree for grapes. ⁴⁵ In the same way, your behaviour reveals what sort of person you are. Whatever you've stored in your heart, whether good or bad, will come out in your speech and conduct.'</p>

<p>⁴⁶ ‘Why do you call me, “Lord, Lord,” and do not do what I say? ⁴⁷ As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. ⁴⁸ They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.’</p>	<p>⁴⁶ Jesus said, ‘There’s no point claiming to follow me if the way you live makes it clear you don’t! ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁹ That’s like choosing to build a house on a beach, with no foundations. When the storm tide sweeps in bang goes your house! Who’d be so stupid? But letting my teaching shape your life is like digging down to bedrock and building a solid, unshakeable house. My words are the best foundation you can have: build your life on them.’</p>
<p>Matthew 12:33-37 – NIV (UK)</p>	<p>Matthew 12:33-37 – Who?</p>
<p>³³ ‘Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognised by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. ³⁵ A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. ³⁶ But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.’</p>	<p>³³ ‘Take a simple lesson from nature: if the fruit’s bad, something’s wrong with the tree. ³⁴⁻³⁵ Like fruit your words reveal the state of your heart. A good heart speaks words of life, but a rotten heart spews forth poison. ³⁶ Don’t think that you can say what you like without consequence. Words matter and God is listening. On Judgement Day, words you spoke without thinking will be broadcast, and you’ll have to explain them. ³⁷ Your own words will convict or acquit you.’</p>
<p>Matthew 16:1-12 – NIV (UK)</p>	<p>Matthew 16:1-12 – – Who?</p>
<p>¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. ² He replied, ‘When evening comes, you say, “It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,” ³ and in the morning, “Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.” You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.’ ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.’ Jesus then left them and went away.</p> <p>⁵ When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. ⁶ ‘Be careful,’ Jesus said to them. ‘Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ ⁷ They discussed this among themselves and said, ‘It is because we didn’t bring any bread.’</p> <p>⁸ Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, ‘You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? ⁹ Do you still not understand? Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? ¹¹ How is it you don’t understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ ¹² Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.</p>	<p>¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees tried again to persuade Jesus to give them a sign to prove he was who he said he was. ² ‘Extraordinary,’ Jesus replied. ‘You know how to read the sky: “Red sky at night, shepherd’s delight; ³ red sky at morning, shepherd’s warning.” Yet you’ve no idea what God is doing before your very eyes. And you’re supposed to be the spiritual leaders of these people? ⁴ I’ve already told you. Look for the sign of Jonah. It’s the only one you’ll get.’ With those words, Jesus left them.</p> <p>⁵ Jesus and his team set out to cross the lake, but his followers forgot to bring any bread. ⁶ ‘Beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees,’ Jesus told them.</p> <p>⁷ ‘He’s telling us off for not bringing any bread with us,’ they said to each other. ⁸ ‘Can you still be so blind?’ Jesus asked. ⁹⁻¹⁰ Twice I’ve fed thousands with a few scraps of food and you could barely carry the leftovers. ¹¹ How come the penny didn’t drop that I’m not talking about physical food! No matter how small the amount of yeast you mix in dough, it spreads through the whole loaf. That’s fine if the yeast is good, but if it’s bad ... I can satisfy your spiritual hunger, whereas they’ll just fill you with religious junk food.’ ¹² Then his followers understood he was warning them against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.</p>